

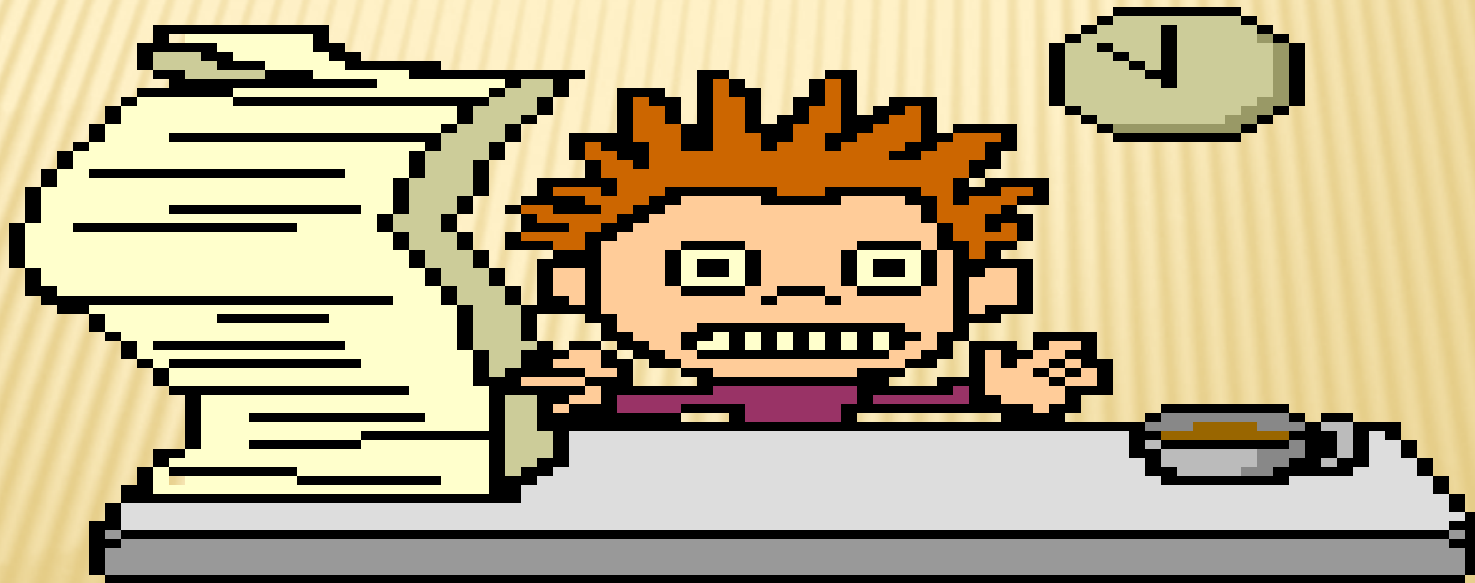
Strategies to Improve Test-Taking and  
Prevent Test Anxiety  
Presented by: Jade J. O'Dell, PhD

# TEST-TAKING TRICKS

# ASSESS YOUR STRESS

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- ✗ Do you get stressed before a test?
- ✗ Let's find out why
- ✗ TEST ANXIETY SCALE





# WHAT'S *ATTITUDE* GOT TO DO WITH IT?

- ✘ Attitude has a lot to do with anxiety and success on a test and in life
- ✘ If you are positive and have done everything you can to prepare for a test, then there is no need to be anxious
- ✘ Be positive, be prepared, and you will do your best
- ✘ Optimism goes a loooooong way!

# BE PREPARED...NOT SCARED!

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- ✘ What are you doing before your test?
- ✘ If you have gone to class, studied and know the material on which you are being tested, then you should be prepared to take the test
- ✘ Know your instructor and his or her tests

# ASK QUESTIONS ABOUT THE TEST

- ✘ Types of questions on the test (true/false, multiple choice, short answer)
- ✘ Is there a time limit?
- ✘ How long is the test? How many questions?
- ✘ Will there be a review session?
- ✘ What is grade value of test?
- ✘ What chapters/sections does test cover?



# MAKE PREDICTIONS

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- ✘ If the instructor talk about it, repeats it, or writes it on the board, chances are, it will be on the test
- ✘ Listen for phrases like, “*You will see this again,*” or “*If I were to ask you this on the test...*”
- ✘ As you skim your chapters and notes, try to predict what your instructor could ask you
- ✘ Make your own test to study for the test!

# TYPES OF TEST REPOSSES

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- ✘ **Quick Time response:** you read the question and you know the answer immediately
- ✘ **Lag-time response:** you read the question, but the answer does not come to you immediately
- ✘ *Don't panic...you may read info in another question that will help you answer the one you do not know...*
- ✘ **No response:** you have no clue how to answer



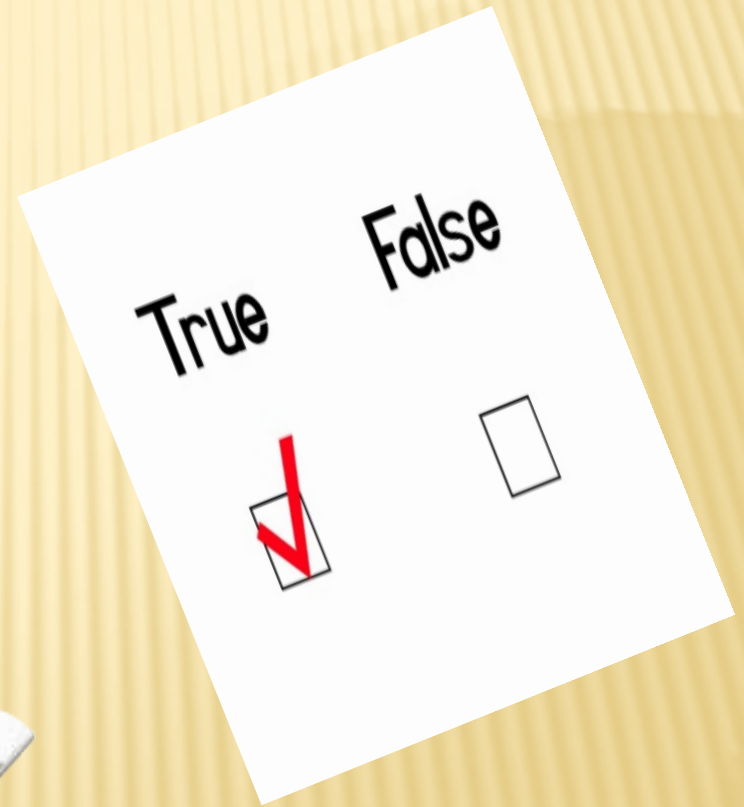
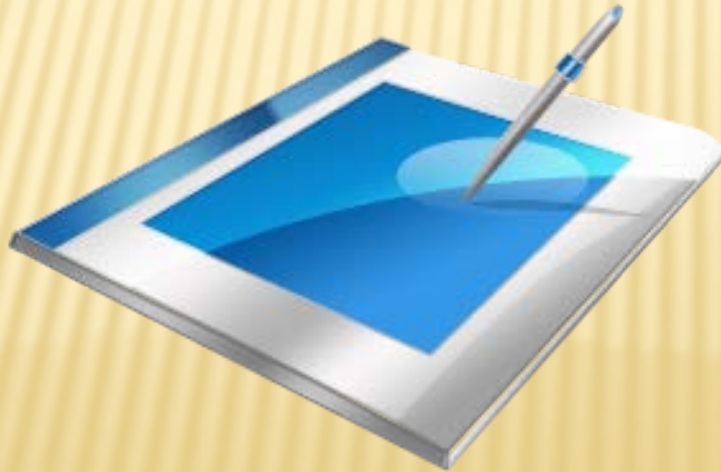
# WHAT DO YOU DO?

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- ✘ Leave the questions you do not know until the end of the test
- ✘ Make an educated guess
- ✘ Try to eliminate all wrong answers
- ✘ Watch for certain types of language that would identify certain answers as wrong

# TYPES OF TESTS

- ✘ Matching
- ✘ True-False
- ✘ Multiple-Choice
- ✘ Short Answer
- ✘ Essay



# MATCHING TESTS

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- ✘ Read directions carefully
- ✘ Read both columns before you answer
- ✘ Is there an equal number of items in each column?
- ✘ Match what you know first
- ✘ Cross off answers that have been used
- ✘ Use the process of elimination for unknown answers
- ✘ Look for clues
- ✘ Use longer statement as a question and the shorter statement as the answer
- ✘ LET'S PRACTICE

# TRUE-FALSE QUESTIONS

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- ✘ Read each statement carefully
- ✘ Watch for key words in statement
- ✘ Read each statement for double negatives, like “not untruthful”
- ✘ Remember that if ANY part of the statement is false, the entire statement is false
- ✘ Answer EVERY question..you have a 50/50 chance of getting it correct

# WORDS ASSOCIATED WITH T/F

TRUE STATEMENTS USE  
WORDS LIKE:

- SOME
- FEW
- MANY
- OFTEN
- SOMETIMES
- RARELY

FALSE STATEMENTS USE  
WORDS LIKE:

- NEVER
- ALL
- EVERY
- ONLY

LET'S PRACTICE!



# MULTIPLE CHOICE TESTS

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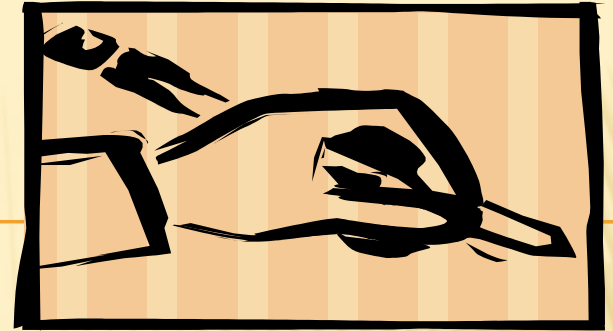
- ✘ Some instructors have a sense of humor...so a joke is usually a wrong answer
- ✘ Answer the question in your head first
- ✘ Look for answers that appear similar; one of them is the correct answer
- ✘ If an answer contains an extreme modifier, like *always*, *every*, or *never*, it is the wrong answer
- ✘ Cross out answers you know are incorrect
- ✘ Read **ALL** options before making a choice
- ✘ When all answers are numbers, the highest and lowest numbers are usually incorrect

# MULTIPLE CHOICE CONTINUED...

- ✘ The most inclusive answer is often correct
- ✘ The longest answer is often correct
- ✘ Make an educated guess
- ✘ If you cannot answer a question, move on to the next one and continue through the test; another question may trigger the answer you do not know
- ✘ LET'S PRACTICE!



# SHORT ANSWER TESTS



- ✘ Read each question and be sure you know what is being asked
- ✘ Be brief with your response
- ✘ Give the same number of answers as there are blanks (\_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ would require two answers)
- ✘ The length of the blank has NOTHING to do with the length of the answer
- ✘ Your initial response is usually correct – don't second guess yourself
- ✘ Look for key words in the statement that may trigger the answer
- ✘ Look for words that come right before the blank...if the word is an, for instance, the answer will start with a vowel



# ESSAY TESTS/QUESTIONS

- ✗ **ANSWER THE QUESTION!** Give the instructor what he or she is asking for...**don't try to BS** in order to make your essay look longer than it needs to be
- ✗ Write a thesis for each essay question
- ✗ Brainstorm and **outline** your thoughts before you begin frantically writing
- ✗ Watch spelling, punctuation and grammar
- ✗ **Use details, like dates, times, places, proper names when necessary**
- ✗ Answer **ALL** parts of the question if it has multiple questions
- ✗ **WATCH THE CLOCK!**
- ✗ Proofread your response before turning it in



# ESSAY QUESTIONS CONT...

✘ Pay attention to action words used in the question and respond accordingly

+ discuss

+ compare/contrast

+ trace

+ diagram

+ illustrate

+ define

+ summarize

- argue

- evaluate

- relate

- analyze

- describe

- list

- explain

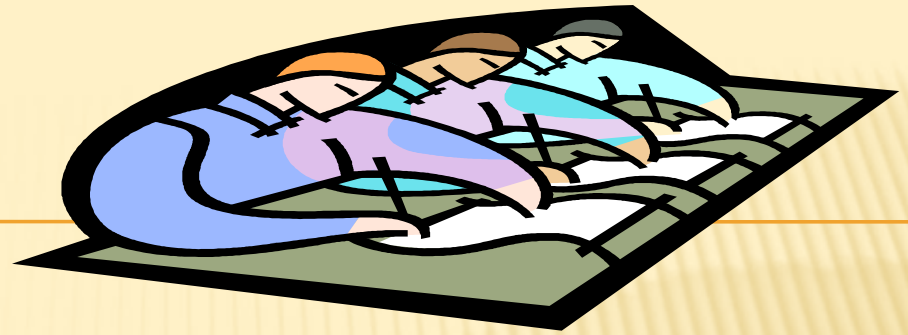


# TEST-TAKING BASICS



- ✘ Read and follow all directions carefully...don't skip reading them to save time!
- ✘ Manage your time...watch the clock
- ✘ Skip over difficult questions...don't waste time pondering one question, move on and go back to it
- ✘ **When in doubt, GUESS!** Narrow the answers down to two, then choose
- ✘ **Check your work...BUT DON'T SECOND GUESS!**

# AVOID TEST ANXIETY



- ✘ Study and be prepared...if you know the material, it will be there when you take the test
- ✘ Form study groups so you can test each other
- ✘ Learn about the test; ask questions
- ✘ Practice and make predictions about the test
- ✘ Don't second guess yourself...self-doubt will sabotage your success
- ✘ Think positive...attitude IS everything
- ✘ Breathe deeply and get a good night's sleep
- ✘ RELAX!!!!

# AVOID PROCRASTINATION & CRAMMING

- ✘ Set priorities
- ✘ Make a schedule and stick to it
- ✘ Try to study at peak times...what is your optimum time of day?
- ✘ Control interruptions...YES....turn off your cell phone!
- ✘ Don't put it off....an instructor is not going to change the test day because YOU are not prepared.

# Q & A

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- × Questions??
- × If you need to chat, contact me!
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